

CANCER IN GENERAL PRACTICE. By Ronald W. Raven, O.B.E.(Mil.), F.R.C.S., and P. E. Thompson Hancock, F.R.C.P. (Pp. ix + 265; figs. 71. 30s.). London : Butterworth. 1952.

THIS book is written by a surgeon and a physician in collaboration and should be useful to the general practitioner for whom it is prepared. Lord Horder in his foreword emphasises that it is the duty of the practitioner, when the symptoms and signs of any disorder do not pursue their natural course or yield to appropriate remedies, to prove that the lesion is not cancerous. Only if a spirit of unrest activates the doctor's mind until he has eliminated this possibility will cancer be diagnosed in the local and potentially curable stage.

Emphasis is rightly placed on diagnosis, and cancers of all parts of the body are described on a regional or organ basis. The development and spread of the disease, the symptoms and signs produced, its treatment and prognosis are clearly set out under sub-headings. In short and well-written sentences the authors make clear and unequivocal statements. Treatment is now highly specialised, but the practitioner will need the brief descriptions given if he is to attempt to answer the questions of patients and friends.

No book can provide an easy way to the diagnosis of any form of cancer. The signs and symptoms are clearly, but somewhat briefly, set out and add little or nothing to what is found scattered throughout any of the larger standard text-books on general medicine or surgery. The information is authoritative and in general a good balance is preserved between common and rare lesions. The page and a quarter devoted to argentaffinoma is perhaps generous, and few would agree that these spread as readily as the authors suggest. The book is well printed for easy reading and reference and is of convenient size. Many of the clinical illustrations are excellent, but a few are of operation specimens and they are too small, lack detail and are of little value.

We believe that the perusal of this book by practitioners will increase the frequency of early diagnosis in cancer.

A TEXT-BOOK OF MENTAL DEFICIENCY. By A. F. Tredgold, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.(Ed.), assisted by R. F. Tredgold, M.A., M.D., D.P.M. Eighth edition. (Pp. xvi + 546; plates 48. 37s. 6d.). London : Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1952.

THE eighth edition of this text-book, which was completed by Dr. A. F. Tredgold before his death, maintains the very high standard of the previous editions; in its preparation Dr. Tredgold was assisted by his son, Dr. R. F. Tredgold.

Since the publication of the seventh edition in 1947, several new Acts of Parliament (the National Health Service Act, the Criminal Justice Act, and Amendments to the 1944 Education Act) have come into force, and the effects that these Acts have on Mental Defectives, are fully discussed.

The chapter on Aetiology has been re-drafted and brought up to date, and the sections on Psychology and Educational Problems have been revised and expanded.

The portion of the book dealing with clinical types, diagnosis, and treatment and training, retains its previous form, and remains as valuable as ever. The numerous illustrative cases quoted in the text, and the excellent photographs, some of which are new, add to the interest of the book. The form for case-taking is comprehensive and detailed and is an extremely valuable guide.

This book is one of the standard text-books on Mental Deficiency, and is in use throughout the United Kingdom. It is a pity, therefore, that the chapter on the Law relating to Mental Defectives refers to the law in England only, and contains no reference to the Mental Treatment Act (part III) of Northern Ireland. It is to be hoped that this omission will be remedied in any subsequent edition.

M. E. L.